

A NEW SPECIES OF *STRYCHNOS* (LOGANIACEAE) FROM NICARAGUA

While preparing treatments of Loganiaceae for the forthcoming *Flora de Nicaragua* and *Flora Mesoamericana*, I encountered a new species of *Strychnos* from the Caribbean lowlands of Nicaragua. *Strychnos* is a pantropical genus of some 200 species. Of the approximately 90 species of the American tropics, only nine, including the one described here, occur in Mexico or Central America. In the most recent treatments of the American species of *Strychnos* (Krukoff & Barneby, 1969; Krukoff, 1972), *S. nicaraguensis* would be assigned to sect. *Breviflorae* Progel subsect. *Eriospermae* Krukoff & Barneby on the basis of its recurved spines, terminal inflorescences, short styles, and seeds with testa composed of soft fibers. Unfortunately, the corolla of *S. nicaraguensis* remains unknown, so that the length of the corolla tube in relation to the calyx, one of the important sectional characters in *Strychnos* (equaling or shorter than the calyx in sect. *Breviflorae*, much longer in the other sections), cannot be positively ascertained. Nevertheless, other characters, principally the recurved spines and fibrous testa, assure its placement in subsect. *Eriospermae* of sect. *Breviflorae*.

***Strychnos nicaraguensis* Huft, sp. nov.**

TYPE: Nicaragua. Zelaya: N of Talolinga in gallery forest, 19 Aug. 1983, J. C. Sandino 4509 (holotype, F-1988116, F neg. no. 62188; isotype, MO, not seen).

Frutex volubilis; caules non conspicue lenticellis praediti, spinis recurvatis. Folia glabra rhombico-ovata, apice longiacuminata, basi acuta vel acuminata, costa supra non impressa, nervis lateralibus obscuris. Flores 4-7, cymis terminalibus compactis; sepala 5 discreta deltato-lanceolata ciliata aliter glabra; corolla staminaque non visa. Fructus laevis, ca. 1.5 mm diametro, luteus, pericarpio tenui; semina 1 vel 2, depresso-globosa, testa fibrosa.

Liana; stems not conspicuously lenticel-

late, with recurved spines to 2 cm long; branchlets wandlike, flexuous, densely puberulous, soon glabrate. *Leaves* with petioles 1-2 mm long, puberulous; blades rhombic-ovate, 3-5(-5.5) cm long, 1.4-2.2 cm wide, (1.7-)2-2.9(-3.2) times as long as wide, glabrous, dull green above, pale below, triplicately nerved, the midvein scarcely or not at all impressed above, the secondary veins obscure; apex long-acuminate; base acute to acuminate; margin entire. *Flowers* 4-7 in compact, terminal, slender-pedunculate cymes 5-7 cm diam., the peduncles 1-1.5 cm long; bracts lanceolate, 1.5-3 mm long, ciliate; pedicels 1-2 mm long; calyx segments 5, free, slightly unequal, deltate-lanceolate, navicular, long-acuminate, ciliate, otherwise glabrous, 1.2-1.8(-2) mm long; corolla not seen; stamens not seen; style ca. 0.8 mm long. *Fruits* globose, smooth, ca. 1.5 cm diam., the shell ca. 0.5 mm thick, yellow; seeds 1 or 2, depressed globose, ca. 5 mm long, ca. 7 mm diam., the testa fibrous.

Subsection *Eriospermae* is distinguished from subsect. *Breviflorae* Krukoff & Barneby, which comprises the rest of sect. *Breviflorae*, solely by the characteristic soft fibrous testa of the seeds, which breaks away from the dry, shrunken endosperm of old seeds and encloses the endosperm like a sac. *Strychnos nicaraguensis* belongs to a group of species of subsect. *Eriospermae* that are characterized by conspicuously lenticellate branchlets, recurved spines, midveins impressed above, faint or obscure foliar reticulations, distinctly pedicellate flowers, and sparingly ciliate calyx lobes. It is distinguished from all species in this group by the absence of conspicuous lenticels and by its distinctive small rhombic-ovate leaves without an impressed midvein. The only other species of this group in Central America, *S. brachi-*

stantha Standley, further differs by its much larger fruits (to 9 cm in diameter) with thick shells, as does *S. nigricans* Progel of southeastern Brazil. The species most closely related to *S. nicaraguensis* appears to be *S. mattogrossensis* S. Moore, a species widely distributed in the Amazon basin. Both species have small fruits with thin shells ca. 0.5 mm thick, but *S. mattogrossensis* differs in having ovate, obovate, or elliptic leaves that are not at all rhombic-ovate and larger, more highly branched cymes 7–25 mm in diameter. Other species in this group include *S. cerradoensis* Krukoff & Barneby, native to the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, which differs from *S. nicaraguensis* by its thick-shelled fruit, and *S. alvimiana* Krukoff & Barneby (*Phytologia* 27: 105. 1973), of the state of Bahia, Brazil,

which has larger leaves that are dull on both surfaces and rounded or obtuse at the base.

Additional specimens examined. NICARAGUA. ZELAYA: Municipio de Siuna, Comarca El Hormiguero, Trocha El Hormiguero, 7 Jan. 1983, *Ortiz* 586 (F); Municipio de Siuna, "Calera," 13°46'N, 84°46'W, 300–345 m, 12 Mar. 1984, *Ortiz* 1790 (F).

LITERATURE CITED

- KRUKOFF, B. A. 1972. American species of *Strychnos*. *Lloydia* 35: 193–271.
- & R. BARNEBY. 1969. Supplementary notes on the American species of *Strychnos*. VIII. *Mem. New York Bot. Gard.* 20(1): 1–93.
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